3:Ma--1 E-5 (1943) 1944 AE 4 Lolo AE 4

EXORCISM, A CUSTOM OF THE BLACK LOLO

The Lolo people are superstitious. Every time sickness or disaster befalls them, they believe that in this mysterious universe some evil spirits are at work, and the only recourse they have is to ask their Pai-mao [wizard priest] to chant liturgies for the extirpation of bad luck.

In the early summer of 1943 I was engaged in a research study of the Lolo language among the Black Lolo (Heh-I) at the Mou-lien district in Wu-ting, and had occasion to observe their customs and rituals in relation to the translation of the Lolo scriptures. This is because what is recorded in their scriptures is largely the gist of their customs and rituals. So in order to thoroughly understand the Lolo scriptures, it is necessary to become familiar with the customs of their tribe.

An exorcising ceremony was witnessed by me at Wan-teh village. The mistress of the house was a certain Mrs. An Hsiao-tseng, whose nephew had been wounded by bandits and was confined to bed. Although they had secured some herb medicine to be applied to the wounds, she would not believe that the medicine could heal the wounds, contending that they were the result of some evil influence. As long as the evil spirit remained the wounded person could not get well, and she begged leave of me to ask the Pai-mao, Chang Wen-yuan, who was translating the scriptures with me to perform exorcism for her. As I was eager to observe the rite I readily agreed.

Although it was only early summer, the weather was unbearably hot, as Wan-teh was a hollow plain surrounded by mountains and completely dried up for the lack of rainfall in many months. I went to the house after lunch with two Pai-mao, Chang Wen-yuan and Chang tzu-hsin, but the ritual lasted until the starlit night. The whole ceremony consisted of two

175 of the southwestern I, with whom Ssue-ma Hsiang-ju /Chinese writer of the second century B.C./ communicated in the Han period. It is probable that the Miao tribes of Hunan and Kweichow provinces originally lived in fertile plains and valleys but were later forced by the Chinese to retreat into the mountains. The Lolo of Liang-shan, however, have always occupied the entire Liang-shan region. They preferred to live on high mountains even though their cultivated fields are centered around mountain streams.

181 The Lolo are a peaceful and contented agricultural people.
512 They are singularly frugal and grave in temperament; they neither laugh nor talk easily. This is especially true of the I of Liang-shan. They work in the rice fields throughout the day, return home at nightfall, and go to sleep immediately after the evening meal. There is hardly any singing or dancing. They form a strong contrast to the nomadic, unrestrained, and pleasure-loving Tibetans.

177 The majority of the Lolo in Yünnan have been very much sinified so that their original customs and habits have almost entirely disappeared. Only those living in the northern border close to Huei-li /a hsien in Sikang/ and in a section further south, as well as those in the district of Lu-nan hsien, keep some of their former manners. Most of their original traits, however, are still retained among the I people in the Ning districts, in Lei /Lei-po/, Ma /Ma-pien/, Ô /O-pien/, P'ing P'ing-shan/ of Szechwan province, and especially in the Liang-shan
565 gion. The Lolo of these regions are divided into two distinct social classes: the "Heh-I" and the "Wa-tzu." But this distinction is not found among all the Lolo tribes in Yünnan, and it is hard to say whether it once prevailed in all other places. Since most primitive societies still retain this type of social system, we assume--but do not venture to assert categorically--that it was originally practiced in all Lolo societies but was later abandoned by some groups that came under Chinese influence. It is also possible that this system had always existed in some regions and not at all in others.

For a thorough study of the Lolo problem, "Heh-I" and "Wa-tzu" are two technical terms which must be understood. The former designates the nobility among the Lolo (called Sepo in the Lolo language). The word "Heh" /black/ has no special significance. (The complexion of the Heh-I is in fact somewhat darker than that of the Chinese, but the so-called "Wa-tzu" or "Pê-I" /Pê means white/ are not really fairer than the Heh-I.) "Wa-tzu" (meaning children)--probably a word borrowed from the Chinese--is used to designate the slaves, who are

177 Liang-shan. For this reason it is necessary for us to make a field study there. Such a study would be of particular interest to ethnographers, linguists and sociologists.

186 In Liang-shan one often finds mixtures of the original Wa-tzu (one type of I) and Chinese captives who have been forced to become Wa-tzu and thereafter have no way of escape. The distinct separation of the Wa-tzu and the Heh-I, who try very hard to maintain their purity, is handed down throughout the ages and cannot be overcome. [582] [834] There is no intermarriage between the Heh-I and the Wa-tzu. Should a Heh-I man rape a woman of the Wa-tzu class, it is considered an intolerable disgrace to the race. It is an even greater crime for a woman of the Heh-I class to have sexual intercourse with a male Wa-tzu, and the punishment for both guilty parties would be death. Such practices remind one of Germany under Hitler's rule. The reasons for the Heh-I's attempt to preserve /97/ racial purity and their practices in this respect are exactly the same as those of the Nazis. The boastful Heh-I likewise consider themselves the most accomplished race as well as the warrior class, and look upon the Chinese and other racial groups with con-
565 tempt. In Liang-shan society the relationship of the Heh-I and Wa-tzu is based on co-operation and the division of labor into three /sic/ categories the upper class Heh-I do not concern themselves with production but engage only in warfare and governing, thus forming a sort of warrior or ruling class; the Wa-tzu are the producers or agricultural labor class. This is almost exactly the same as Nazi Germany's national philosophy (stressing "Deutschland über alles" and intent on reducing the peoples of Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, etc., to the status of laborers controlled by the Germans). It is possible to see from this that the prevalent Nazi theories are about to lead the world back to the Lolo stage.

177 131 [18] The majority of the Lolo in Yünnan province and those in the Ning districts of Yueh-sui, Mien-ning, Yen-yüan, Yen-pien, etc. have been very much sinified, and are known as "Shou-I." /sinified Lolo/. The fiercest and most overbearing of the I are concentrated in the Liang-shan region, in which Chao-chüeh and Lei-po have the most ruthless and complex branches, and Ma-pien and Ô-pien, by comparison, the gentlest and simplest. All the I areas in Lei-po hsien are part of the Hsiao Liang-shan region and are inhabited mostly by the Wa-tzu attached to the Heh-I of Ta Liang-shan. These Wa-tzu, although disposed to plunder, are not so fierce and haughty as their masters. The main region occupied by the so-called Sheng-I or Yen-I (those who have been very little sinified as compared with the Shou-I)

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Lolo AE4

Perhaps the saddest fact about the No-su is the rapidity with which they are dying out at the present time in the north-west of Kweichow and north-east of Yunnan. The unsanitary conditions in which they live—the water they drink is often drawn from stagnant pools fouled by sheep and cattle—and their riotous indulgence in whisky, opium, and other vices, sufficiently account for this. Such decadence of the race has given the strong an opportunity of enriching themselves at the expense of the weak, so that quarrelling and fighting about the division of land is always going on. They are burdened with the thought that their doom as a race is sealed. Some of them gather a little consolation from the coming of Christianity, and hope that it means the arrest of their decline. It may be, however, that the missionaries have arrived too late, for when deterioration of that sort sets in among any race it is difficult to arrest it.

When the Manchus came to China the No-su were practically independent, and the city of Chaotung did not then exist. The Manchus brought Yunnan and Kweichow under effective Imperial control. The campaign against the No-su of Chaotung and Weining was successful, and these were brought under Chinese rule.

[175 cont.]

142 marry only with persons of the same tribe. A fact, however, which
582 does not prevent them, as we have indicated above, from adopting
[177] the customs and even the costumes of the other groups, but without going as far as a "misalliance."

While the "Lolo" of China have retained the character of
● 181 warriors and plunderers, the "Lolo" of Tonkin are of a peaceful and rather indolent disposition, which frequently places them in a position of inferiority in relation to their more energetic and active neighbors.

273 [176] They often use alcohol, tobacco, and especially opium
276 to excess.

197 The "Lolo" of Upper Tonkin use Burmo-Tibetan idioms, whose vocabularies vary noticeably from one tribe to another.

The elements of the sentence follow one another in the follow-
193 ing order: subject, adjective, direct complement, verb, indirect complement, preposition.

Example: My good father sells (his) house to (a) man.
(of) me the father good house sells man to.

198 They use the "kouan-hoa" and sometimes the "Thai" as lan-
212 guages of commerce; they use Chinese characters for their writing.

They have no special form of writing and are not acquainted with the writing used by the "Lolo" of Yunnan.

153 Moreover, they are rather intelligent and capable of receiving a certain degree of culture.

The men are progressively adopting the costume of the "Thai";
291 [177] however, they preserve a suit of the distinctive tribal costume in which to be dressed after their death, so that their ancestors may be able to recognize them. The "Lolo" costume consists:

1. Of a short jacket, opened widely in front of the chest and not reaching below the belt.

2. Of a wide pantaloon, bearing at the lower part of the legs an embroidered band done with red-and-yellow thread and representing squares and triangles separated by broken lines.

3. Of a turban of very dark-blue material, whose extremities bear embroidery similar to that on the pantaloon.

[302] No part of the head is shaved. The hair is wound in a chignon behind the head and bound in the turban.

[181 cont.]

769 778 nine knots for a woman, serve as armatures for figurines made from tufts of paper. These figurines, which are of a height of about ten centimeters, are fastened to the partition which forms the ancestral altar.

793 The "Lolo" have priests-sorcerers who pass down the traditions by word of mouth.

181 53 The "Lolo" are of a rather happy disposition, and like the "Meo" they neglect no opportunity for feasting. They perform singing dances, the boys on one side, and the girls on the other. These dances are accompanied by the musical instruments of which we have spoken above.

[182] The "F'ou-la"

101 [131] The "F'ou-la" form a tribe of the "Lolo" group which is represented in Tonkin by only a hundred people, spread in small hamlets the length of the frontier, in the regions of Hoang-Su-Phi, Muong-khuong, and Baxat.

The "Thai" call them the "P'ou-la."

In their dialect, the "F'ou-la" call themselves by the name of "Peu-pa."

101 582 [167] Like the other "Lolo," the "F'ou-la" come from the provinces of the south of China and are extremely mixed with the other tribes of the frontier zone, but they also preserve their original characters by avoiding all intermarriage with their neighbors. They maintain their special type as described above with reference to the "Lolo." [181] They are timid and gentle, which constitutes a weakness in relation to the neighboring tribes, who are more energetic.

197 The vocabulary of the "F'ou-la" differs noticeably from that of the "Lolo," but evidently is related to the dialects of the group; the sentence structure is identical with that of the "Lolo."

212 198 They are not acquainted with any writing; they employ Chinese characters. Their language of commerce is the "kouan-hoa."

342 231 The "F'ou-la" live in cabins of two principal models:

1. Cabins on piles, of the type used among the "Thai," but consisting of a flooring raised only a very little above the ground

[185]

The "Xa-pho"

101 131 161 The name of "Xa-pho" is used to designate rather important "Lolo" tribes, numbering from 3,000 to 4,000 individuals, which are settled on the right bank of the Red River in the regions of Baoha and of Coc-Leu, mixed with "Thai" and with "Nhang."

These tribes call themselves the "Lao-pa."

181 648 The "Xa-pho" are rather closely related to the "F'ou-la." Even more timid than the latter, they have allowed themselves to be completely dominated by the "Thai," who often treat them as veritable slaves, available to perform forced labor or to pay taxes without mercy. Moreover, the "Xa-pho" accept this inferior position, which they appear to have no desire to alter.

291 531 The costumes of the women resemble those of the "F'ou-la," but the jacket is shorter and it is edged by a wide band on which are embroidered lozenges filled with multicolored designs.

197 The dialect has many analogies to the "F'ou-la" dialect. The language of commerce is the "Thai" and sometimes Annamese.

177 342 361 The mores and customs of the "Xa-pho" come closer and closer to those of the "Thai" and of the "Nhang" among whom they live. The cabins, which are very clean, are most frequently of the type built on piles. The hamlets are not far from the rice fields, but always located on the slopes of the hillsides.

771 769 No more than the other "Lolo," the "Xa-pho" have neither a religion nor beliefs which are well defined, beyond a vague worship rendered to their ancestors. They are very little interested in matters concerning souls and spirits.

773 They have very few legends. They appear to be totally ignorant of that of the deluge, which, nevertheless, is known, with numerous variations, by almost all of other tribes of Upper Tonkin. They have preserved one which explains in the following manner the required style of the "Lolo" jackets: The first human couple had four sons from whom are descended the four principal races of the region:

[101] The "Xa-pho" called "Lao-pa."
The "Thai" called "Gia-lo-pa."

[185 cont.]

773 The "Man" called "Yem-pa."
[101] The "Meo" called "Méo-pa."

[186] When the mother was making the first garment for her children, she commenced with the ancestors of the "Thai" and of the "Man," to whom she gave very good measure. Next, the piece of material being more than half used up, she cut shorter the garment for the ancestor of the "Méo." After this so little material remained that the ancestor of the "Xa-pho" could have only the little jacket still worn by the "Lolo."

[187] The "Ho-nhi"

101 This "Lolo" tribe is represented in Tonkin, between Phongtho
131 and Trinhthuong, only by a few hamlets containing a total of from
161 200 to 300 individuals. Important groupings of "Ho-nhi" are settled in southern Ynnnan, particularly in the region of Pou-eurl. They still are called by the names of "Ouo-ni" or "Wo-ni."

[167] They come from western Yunnan.

They have the general appearance of the "Méo," but they
142 have skin noticeably darker than the latter. They have very sturdy
147 constitutions, but are of a gentle and apprehensive disposition which
● 181 impels them to isolation.

They speak a "Lolo" dialect rather different from that of the
197 other tribes of the group. They use the "kouan-hoa" as their com-
198 mercial language. They have a very limited number of literate
212 persons.

The costume of the men resembles that of the "Méo" of the
291 region, but the blue color of the costume is a very dark shade.
[177] The women likewise wear clothing of a very dark-blue material, which includes the following:

1. A jacket reaching down to the knees. This jacket is slit on the left side from the bottom up to the belt. The front is lifted up and fastened to the belt on the right side.

2. A breast covering of triangular shape. The point of the triangle is at the top, held about the neck by a cord. The lower

[187 cont.]

291 part of the breast covering is attached about the belt.

3. A pantaloon of a very wide style, stopping at the knees.

4. Leggings coming up to just above the knees and often decorated with embroidery on the lower portion.

5. A headdress recalling, in its total appearance, the one we have described for the "Pa-y" women.

The hair, knotted in a very tight chignon, carries on its high-
[302] est portion a sort of rigid armature trimmed with spherical silver buttons. On top of the whole is placed a very light piece of material, of fine linen dyed dark blue, with a fringed border.

301 The "Ho-nhi" women have very abundant jewelry: rings, bracelets, and earrings. They also have necklaces of a special design, made [188] of little round plaques of embossed silver, threaded upon a cord. Some of the women trim the front of their jackets with a row of these same small plaques.

342 The "Ho-nhi" cabins are rectangular and very small. The
353 walls are of mud. The straw roof comes very low down, in such a way as to create all along the outside walls a wide, sheltered corridor. The hut has only one door, which opens on an interior hallway. It is divided into several compartments by light mud partitions. All its rooms open upon the interior hallway. The hall of honor contains the ancestral altar and usually is located opposite the entrance doorway. The kitchen is most frequently set up in the interior hallway in the section farthest away from the entrance doorway.

243 The type of life of the "Ho-nhi" is like that of all the tribes that cultivate irrigated rice fields. The agricultural implements and the farming methods are in no way unusual.

771 The beliefs and customs are rather close to those of the "Méo."
● 181 Like the latter, the "Ho-nhi" love independence. Living very isolated on their high hills, they retain great freedom of bearing and are not obsessed by a fear of evil spirits.

58 The "Ho-nhi" marry among themselves. The marriage proposal is made by intermediaries. The wedding ceremonies present no noticeable peculiarity. As among all the other groups, they are marked by great rejoicing and substantial feasts.

Lolo AEH
Kha AM7

weep at his feet, while men execute rhythmic dances in front of the door. They arrange themselves in Indian file, in order of age, and at the sound of the tom-tom they advance, retire, or revolve together. L 769

Religious ideas of the Lolo inhabiting the frontier zone of Tonkin resemble those of the Meo in whose midst they live. L 771 177

The mission of Captain d'Olonne, which has just traveled throughout the /151/ whole country of the independent Lolo, will undoubtedly report interesting information on the true customs of the Lolo ethnic group. They have already informed us that this people is endowed with sufficient energy to free themselves completely from Chinese domination. This fact alone causes us to believe that their Tonkin kinsmen have degenerated, that their isolation in the midst of other populations has weakened them. L 181

Section 4

The Xa or Kha Ethnic Group

The Xa, who are called Kha in Laos, are the most miserable of all the mountaineers. Their costume is made of the same cloth as that of the Yao and consists of wide trousers for the men and a short jacket. Women wear embroidery on their garments, but they always are so dirty that the colors cannot be seen. Jewelry is of copper. Men wear neither hat nor turban. The hair simply is knotted in a filthy chignon. K 101 291

The Xa has neither writing, nor intellectual culture of any sort. To communicate with one another they are satisfied with scratching a very limited number of conventional signs on small pieces of wood or bamboo. Some Xa tribes still speak their primitive tongue which is very crude, and has the peculiarity that the "r" is rolled with a vigor recalling Malayan or Cambodian pronounciation. The Teng, for example, pronounce the words which mean "horse" and "chicken" as if they had two r's: mbrran and irr. But most of the poor Xa families who are scattered in the Tonkin mountains are so de-nationalized that they have forgotten their own tongue and now speak Tai or Annamese. K 212

The Xa dwell at the same altitude as the Yao and cultivate maize like them on steep mountain slopes. Their house is raised on piles the length of the escarpments, in such a way that the interior K [131 241] 342